



## MILWAUKEE NUMISMATIC NEWS

**May 2020** – The 1010<sup>th</sup> regular MNS meeting scheduled for May is cancelled due to the pandemic. We look forward to resuming regular club meetings in June or as soon as possible.

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*The Milwaukee Numismatic Society, founded in 1934, is the oldest and largest organization in Milwaukee devoted to the study of money. Meetings are held at 7:00 PM on the third Thursday of each month in the Community Room on the lower level of Mayfair Mall (W. North Avenue at N. Mayfair Road). The annual MNS coin show is held in October.*

**May Coin of the Month:** The year 2001 marked the 1700<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the conversion of Armenia to Christianity, and among the numerous medals issued to mark this milestone is this heavy 60 mm diameter pewter medal issued by the Armenian Catholic Patriarchate in Lebanon. The obverse shows the Armenian Catholic Monastery in Bzommar (Lebanon) with Mt. Ararat in the background; the reverse shows St. Gregory the Enlightener anointing the king and queen of Armenia in 301 AD. It's a remarkable medal, extremely attractive, well-executed, and RARE. I have never seen another example.





### May 2020 MNS President's Message

There is not much to report on given the current "safer-at-home" orders. Mayfair Mall is going to remain closed through the month of May, so that means no May 21<sup>st</sup> meeting. All upcoming coin shows have been completely cancelled. It is quite frankly a surprise that as of this writing the ANA has not taken action to potentially cancel the World's Fair of Money in Pittsburgh this August. If the show stays on I am quite seriously considering taking a drive out there to attend.

The spring auction will be completely cancelled and we will focus on having the auction at the November meeting, which will hopefully be bigger and better than ever. We are also planning to continue omitting refreshments from the upcoming meetings in an attempt to keep members from unnecessarily having to visit the grocery store.

Hopefully we can all get together at the June meeting and share stories of our times locked away and experiencing self-distancing. Then in July we will have an expanded show and tell to see what the membership all added to their collections while cloistered away, followed by the postposed talk of Peter's at the August meeting.

Looking forward to seeing everyone safe and sound very soon once this all passes.

Happy Collecting,  
Justin J. Perrault  
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262.613.9996

### Editorial

*Here we are, fellow numismatists, looking at the third consecutive month of no meetings, no coin shows, no scout clinic, and in May, no semi-annual club auction. It's exactly for this reason that we hope to keep the Milwaukee Numismatic News going, as long as we are able to get it printed and the Post Office is still able to deliver the mail.*

*Many of our dealer friends have been hard hit. In mid-March, I got to the Waukesha Show and although activity was brisk, everything shut down shortly thereafter. Stores are closed to the public, but those doing business online or by mail may still be able to survive. Another obstacle has been getting access to my safe deposit box. The lobby at my bank is closed until later in May. So while the spot price of gold has been climbing, it's been hard to take advantage of it.*

*Numismatically, I've found the last couple of months rather refreshing. There's been extra time to read and study. Also, I have had more time spend on my collection. So I pulled out some coins that I haven't looked at in a couple of years. I've had a chance to reacquaint myself with some old friends, and I've been scanning ads and websites looking for new friends to add to the old.*

*My suggestion while we wait this out: patronize a dealer and add some new coins to your collection. Or do a little research and write an article for the Milwaukee Numismatic News. Meanwhile, minimize social contact, use PPE and rigorous handwashing, and stay home as much as possible. -- LAS*

# MN\$ 2020

## Schedule

Monthly meetings are held at 7:00 pm on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of each month in the Community Meeting Room in the lower level of Mayfair Mall. Visitors interested in numismatics are welcome.

## Monthly meeting programs

Jan 16: Officer Inductions  
Feb 20: "Numismatic Stories & Anecdotes" by: Andy Kimmel  
March 19: CANCELLED  
April 16: CANCELLED  
May 21: CANCELLED  
June 18: Self-Distancing Stories  
July 16: Expanded Show and Tell  
Aug 20: "Gold Star Mothers & Their Medals" by: Peter Jacobsohn (No Show and Tell)  
Sept 17: Numismatic Trivia Game  
Oct 15: Raffle Prize Drawing  
Nov 19: Autumn Auction; Election Slate  
Dec 17: Holiday Party; Officer Elections

## Annual Dues

Dues for 2020 are \$10. Please pay Leon A. at the next meeting, or they may be mailed to **MNS, PO Box 26886, Wauwatosa, WI 53226-0886.** Thanks to those who have paid. Those who have not paid will be removed from the club's mailing list.

## Random Information

MNS is a volunteer organization. We always need new and interesting programs, activities, helpers to work at events, ~~and someone to bring refreshments for the meetings.~~ We are also looking for ideas for club outings. ~~MNS will reimburse refreshment expenses up to \$60.~~ To volunteer, please contact Pres. Justin Perrault at 262.613.9996 or VP Jim Heinrich at 262.796.1814. Thanks to everyone who has stepped up by volunteering their time and talent to make the club a success.

## 2020 Numismatic Events

Oct. 4: MNS Coin Show at Serb Hall  
5101 W. Oklahoma Ave. (9-4 PM)

## Refreshment Schedule

Jan: John B.  
Feb: Tom R.  
Mar: ~~Dave Hunsicker~~  
Apr: ~~Jordan H.~~  
May: ~~Adele & Norm V.~~  
Jun: OPEN  
Jul: OPEN  
Aug: Justin P.  
Sep: OPEN  
Oct: OPEN  
Nov: OPEN  
Dec: Holiday Party





## Hobbies for Kings and the People

From collecting ancient coins to Victorian taxidermy, we've found ingenious ways to fill our free time.

By Amanda Foreman

Wall Street Journal, April 16, 2020 12:10 pm ET

**It's no surprise** that many Americans are turning or returning to hobbies during the current crisis. By definition, a hobby requires time outside of work.

We don't hear much about hobbies in ancient history because most people never had any leisure time. They were too busy obeying their masters or just scraping by. The earliest known hobbyists may have been Nabonidus, the last king of Babylonia in the 6th century B.C., and his daughter Ennigaldi-Nanna. Both were passionate antiquarians: Nabonidus liked to restore ruined temples while Ennigaldi-Nanna collected ancient artifacts. She displayed them in a special room in her palace, effectively creating the world's first museum.

Augustus Caesar, the first Roman emperor, was another avid collector of ancient objects, especially Greek gold coins. The Romans recognized the benefits of having a hobby, but for them the concept excluded any kind of manual work. When the poet Ovid, exiled by Augustus on unknown charges, wrote home that he yearned to tend his garden again, he didn't mean with a shovel. That's what slaves were for.

Hobbies long continued to be a luxury for potentates. But in the Renaissance, the printing press combined with higher standards of living to create new possibilities for hobbyists. The change can be seen in the paintings of Sofonisba Anguissola, one of the first Italian painters to depict her subjects enjoying ordinary activities like reading or playing an instrument. Her most famous painting, "The Chess Game" (1555), shows members of her family engaged in a match.

Upper-class snobbery toward any hobby that might be deemed physical still lingered, however. The English diplomat and scholar Sir Thomas Elyot warned readers in "The Boke Named the Governour" (1531) that playing a musical instrument was fine "for recreation after tedious or laborious affaires." But it had to be kept private, lest the practitioner be mistaken for "a common servant or minstrel."

Hobbies received a massive boost from the Industrial Revolution. It wasn't simply that people had more free time; there were also many more things to do and acquire. Stamp collecting took off soon after the introduction of the world's first stamp, the Penny Black, in Britain in 1840. As technology became cheaper, hobbies emerged that bridged the old division between intellectual and manual labor, such as photography and microscopy. Taxidermy allowed the Victorians to mash the macabre and the whimsical together: Ice-skating hedgehogs, card-playing mice and dancing cats were popular with taxidermists.

In the U.S., the adoption of hobbies increased dramatically during the Great Depression. For the unemployed, they were an inexpensive way to give purpose and achievement to their days. Throughout the 1930s, nonprofit organizations such as the Leisure League of America and the National Home Workshop Guild encouraged Americans to develop their talents. "You Can Write" was the hopeful title of a 1934 Leisure League publication.

Even Winston Churchill took up painting in his 40s, saying later that the hobby rescued him "in a most trying time." We are in our own trying time, so why not go for it? I think I'll teach myself to bake bread next week.



## CASH FOR KIDS

By Tom Casper

Growing up in the 1950s play paper money could always be found in the children's toy box. After buying a pack of paper money at the dime store and returning home you would get a group of neighborhood children together and play "store". Common household items were priced and play money was given out so they could make purchases. One of my friends was appointed cashier and with a toy cash register would ring up the items, accept payment and make change.

Play paper money is interesting, fun to collect and relatively inexpensive. A book on play coins came out in 1985 titled *Play Money of American Children* by Richard F. Clothier. A sequel on play paper money never followed. Play paper money in the U.S. came out in the 1880's. It is difficult to determine the age of many pieces because most lack a date and usually are absent of any printer name. Hundreds of different examples exist. Many series were issued in denominations similar to U.S. currency. Shown here are a few examples of early play paper money that you might remember if you grew up in the 1950s

The oldest piece I have is undated and is a pre-1928 note because it is the same size as the large size U.S. currency notes in circulation at the time. The piece is called Phoney Mazuma with the denomination reading NIX, meaning it's not worth anything. The note is overprinted with the number 1 stamped on the four corners.

Play paper money took hold in the early 1930's. The initial pieces were small in size but shortly became the size of our present U.S. currency. The earliest dated piece I have is from 1932. They were put out by the Orbit Gum Co. of Chicago. The denominations were 1, 5, 10, 20 Smackers and came in packages of gum.

Parker Bros. in 1932 came out with the game, Eddie Cantor's "Tell It to The Judge". The board game had squares reading, "See the Judge". The judge could levy fines. The play money from the game was used to pay the fines. Denominations are 5, 10, 20, 100, all uniface in different colors. Cantor was an actor, comedian & singer from 1907-1962.

In 1933 the Dietz Gum Co., also of Chicago, came out with a series of notes picturing U.S. Presidents in denominations of \$1 to \$100 play bucks. The latest President pictured is Franklin D. Roosevelt whose term was printed on the note as 1933-1937. They didn't know at the time he would be re-elected. This piece appears to be the last note in the series.

Children's board games introduced children to play money. The goal was to acquire as much money as you could in order to win. One of the most famous board games is Monopoly. It was created in 1935 and is still being produced. It was originally published by Parker Bros, now Hasbro. The game involves buying and selling properties and charging rent when a player lands on your property. Each player is given money in denominations of \$1, \$5, \$10, \$20, \$50, \$100, \$500, all in different colors and uniface. Monopoly money the designs over the years, mostly undated. In 1995, while celebrating their Sixtieth Anniversary, they issued a series of notes dated 1935-1995.

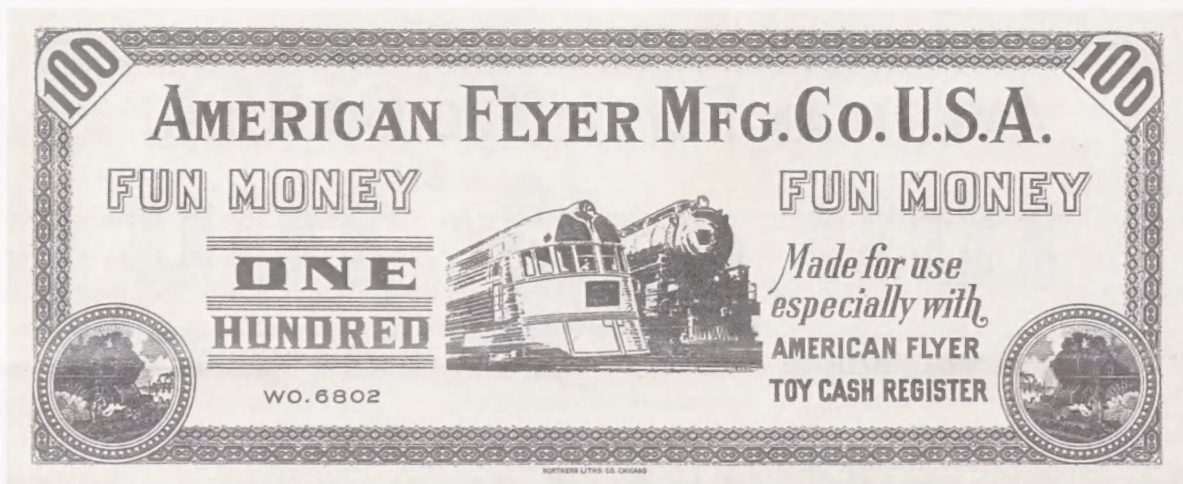
Another set of notes, 5 & 10, picture Phil Silvers on the front and Gardner Money and "You'll Never Get Rich" on the back. Gardner & Co., Chicago produced board games and these pieces were used in one of their games. Phil Silvers was an entertainer and comedian from about 1940 to 1972. He is best known for the TV series, The Phil Silvers Show (1955-59).

We are all familiar with Whitman Publishing Co., the publisher of the famous Guide Book of United States Coins (Red Book). At one time they were located in Racine, Wisconsin. They produced a number of series of paper money with different designs. Denominations of \$1, \$5, & \$10 are known in this older style which have their name and location on the note. The notes are titled "Educational Toy Money".

When I was young, most boys had an electric train. I had the Lionel brand. If you had an American Flyer you could buy accessories such as an American Flyer toy cash register and play money called Fun Money. The bills are from the 1950s and were printed in denominations of 1, 5, 10, 50, 100. The printer is Northern Litho. Co., Chicago.

Maybe, with all the play money children collected while playing these games, it may have impacted them when they got older. Perhaps some have continued to collect currency, now only with real money, to enjoy a life-long hobby of currency collecting.











## An MNS Currency Note for Young Numismatists from 2010-2012

Scan courtesy of Tom Casper (enlarged)

